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Spring, 1953 40 cents

Volume 18 Spring, 1953 Number 2

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

A Quarterly devoted to Christianity and Social Reconstruction

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Christianity and Society is published by Christian Action, a fellowship of Christians concerned with the social implications of their faith. Christian Action seeks:

To understand current social issues in the light of central Christian convictions.

To provide a fellowship for mutual support and criticism among Christians who are profoundly concerned about the social problems of our time.

To encourage groups of Christians to act creatively and responsibly in their local communities as well as in national and international affairs.

To develop a core of common convictions and principles for the strengthening of the Christian social witness.

New ways to influence the churches and secular society in the direction of greater responsibility to all members of the community.

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Christianity and Society is published quarterly by Christian Action. Subscriptions: U. S., $1.50 per year; 40¢ per copy. England, 6 shillings per year. Australia, 7 shillings and six pence per year. Subscriptions should be sent to Mrs. Nola Meade, Secretary, 3041 Broadway, New York 27, N. Y., or to Donald M. Mathers, Annandale, North End Road, London N.W. 11, United Kingdom.

CHRISTIANITY and SOCIETY

EDITORIALS

The New Administration at Home and Abroad

The election last November was a considerable shift in political power, which brought the group dominant in business but shut out from the seats of government, into control of our political destinies. The question about this shift in power is whether we face a period of constructive conservatism or of reaction. Upon the answer to that question much more depends than did upon the outcome of the election; for the shift in power was in effect inevitable, given the general political tendencies in the western world, which included for instance the Tory victory over Labor in Britain; the taint of corruption in what was once a New Deal administration; and the weariness of the public with our burdens of hegemony in the free world, more particularly our burdens and frustrations in Korea.

Whether the Administration will achieve a constructive conservatism must be answered in both the field of foreign policy and of domestic affairs. In foreign policy the Administration has already proved that it is willing to lead the nation in assuming our vast responsibilities, by turning its back on its campaign promises, implied or explicit. Taxes are not to be reduced before the budget is balanced. There is to be no Asian adventure and no withdrawal from Europe. We might have known this; for the Republican victory was possible only under the leadership of a man who was not only untainted by the previous irresponssibility of the Party in foreign affairs, but was in fact the architect of the European defense community and the symbol of our responsible relation to Europe. We might have known the course he would take; and yet we did not know, for the candidate thought it necessary to sound notes which would bind the two parts of the Republican party together, and which would at the same time express our sense of responsibility to the world community and our weariness with some of the burdens of those responsibilities. His victory is supposed to be merely the fruit of his personal popularity but it may well be that these shrewd notes of equivocation had something to do with it. The mild resolution chiding Stalin for violating agreements, the repudiation of which were promised in the campaign, is a symbol of the difference between promise and performance in foreign policy.

But since the victor represented that wing of the Republican party which agreed with the previous foreign policy, and challenged only domestic policy, the prospect for a responsible conservatism in domestic affairs is naturally more problematic. A responsible conservatism would have to accept at least a portion of the previous New Deal policy, the basis of which was the use of the government's sovereign power to establish the general welfare, and eliminate only those features of the policy which tended to make our economy too rigid. Eisenhower made promises which make it clear that he does not intend to turn the clock back; and there are indications that in the realm of practical policies we will indeed enjoy a responsible conservatism.

The irresponsibility will be on the side of the ideological struggle, for which McCarthy is the instrument and symbol, and in which American conservatism will seek to put all politics left of center at a moral disadvantage by proving it to be intimately related to the ideology which produced horrible tyranny in Russia. There is no merit in the basic indictment. A pragmatic leftist policy which redresses some of the disbalances in the economic realm by the use of political power is not related to communism. But the politics left of center is vulnerable because of the confusion of a few so-called idealists who flirted with Stalinism and whose confusion was vividly portrayed in the treason of a very few. This confusion, together with the undoubted evils of Soviet tyranny, gives American conservatism the tempting chance to tar the left with the taint of the horrible evil.

Beyond that the prospect of a policy of responsibility on the practical front, and of irresponsibility on the ideological front, is not due merely to the fact that Senator McCarthy is a member of the victorious Party. It corresponds to the strength and the weakness of the American business community which has come to terms with the facts of life practically by adjusting itself to the demands of justice in a technical age while preserving an hysterical devotion to the principles of classical economic liberalism and an equally hysterical insistence that even the most pragmatic use of political power in the economic realm is a step down the slippery slope which leads to "collectivism". Thus we have achieved a much larger measure of social security and justice than the moribund capitalistic systems of Europe, while our propaganda picture of ourselves feeds the prejudices not only of the Marxists but of the neutralists in both Europe and Asia.

Not that the conservative policy is harmless in every respect. For instance, while the old Fair Deal administration fed the fires of inflation with a policy of low interest rates, the new Administration established high interest for the public debt at the precise moment when we are threatened with deflation, rather than inflation. It will be interesting to see whether the first break in prices which occurs in the meat producing sector of our economy will be allowed to run its course until an inflationary economy is shaken down, or whether farm pressure will tempt the Administration to yield at this strategic point and reinstitute price supports, despite its promise of a freer economy, and perhaps because of its conflicting promise to the farmers of continued price supports.

In any event the signs do not point to a ruthless class struggle which would justify the orthodox Marxist predictions. At least there is no sign of such a struggle in the realm of practical politics. But there are ominous indications of an ideological struggle waged with fury and lack of scruple, freezing all thought processes by generating the fear of the consequences of nonconformity. Evidently the State Department is not to be spared despite the fact that Mr. Acheson is no longer its head. It is significant too that the next targets for McCarthy, Jenner, et al, will be the schools and colleges. A long standing score between the business community and the intellectual leaders of the country is to be settled. In warding off that attack, Taft, a member of the Yale Corporation, seems more solid than the ex-President of Columbia University.

Reinhold Niebuhr

Norman Thomas

Norman Thomas recently wrote a modest little book which is symbolically, rather than intrinsically, important. It symbolized the end of an era. In this volume Mr. Thomas questions the Messianic role of the working class and casts doubt on the efficacy of the socialization of property as an instrument of justice. He thinks that socialization, even when it is held under democratic control, will make for rigidity in the society; and he favors instead a com-

petitive society in which various vitalities and forces are held in creative tension. This partial renunciation of his socialistic faith by America's leading socialist marks the tremendous shift of emphasis in the political and spiritual climate of our nation and of the world in the past two decades. In the thirties even capitalists were defeatist about the future of "free enterprise"; and in the fifties even socialists are dubious about the efficacy of the policy of socialization. For not only Mr. Thomas but the modern British heirs of the Fabians have found it necessary to restate and to modify their faith.

What has happened to effect this change? On the one hand the communist tyranny has revealed the evil effects of a consistent application of the Marxist dogma; for the dogma erroneously equates the power of ownership with economic power and obscures the power of the manager. Therefore the policy of socialization invests one oligarchy with both economic and political power as it presides over the managerial functions in both realms. Not that Mr. Thomas was ever an orthodox Marxist. He never preached the "dictatorship of the proletariat", which has so ignominiously degenerated into the dictatorship of a single oligarchy and even a single tyrant. Furthermore he mixed Christian pacifism with Marxism and thereby helped to make the Socialist party irrelevant during the years when civilization faced formidable threats from military tyrants.

But while his Marxist heresies accounted for part of the irrelevance of socialism in this country, his Marxist orthodoxy accounted for the other half; and Mr. Thomas was more orthodox than most of us in his Marxism. The Marxist orthodoxies proved irrelevant because meanwhile a democratic-capitalistic society, about which most of us were so defeatist two decades ago, proved that there were greater resources in its democratic balances than we had imagined. The economic realm, which seemed to be heading for ever increasing centralization of power, developed balances of justice through the formation of what Professor Galbraith has described as "counterwailing" power. The intervention of the state, not in orthodox Marxist programs of "socialization", but in the pragmatic terms of the New Deal, guided explicitly or implicitly by Keynesian principles, provided the necessary balances which the economic realm lacked. In any event the difference between the world of Henry Ford, with his moral pretensions and the realities of the early motor industry, which seemed to justify every Marxist criticism of capitalism, and the present world in which Henry Ford III has amicable relations with the resourceful head of a powerful labor union and in which General Motors signs a five year labor contract, containing an escalator clause which allows automatic increases for increased productivity; the difference between these two worlds is tremendous.

In other words the change in political climate is due both to the corruption of the alternative to capitalism and to the revelation of resources of justice in a free society which were not suspected two decades ago. Meanwhile, the one great danger to our democracy is that the thorough discrediting of the Marxist alternative to our "way of life" should have given our conservatives a seeming justification for an hysterical warfare against every form of dissent, and a complacent defense of the dogmas of the right, which have been refuted as fully, though not as dramatically, as the dogmas of the left. For nothing is more certain than that such justice as we are able to prize, has not been gained by the automatic harmonies inherent in the economic process; they are the fruit of human contrivance and of a wise statesmanship in business and government.

Meanwhile, it is significant both for the character of our democracy and for the obvious integrity of Mr. Thomas, that he has acquired the status of an elder statesman in our nation despite his being the leader of an essentially irrelevant and dying political movement. The cynic might suspect that he would not be so generally honored if the movement behind him

were more formidable; but that would not be right. Mr. Thomas has a shining integrity which appeals to the people beyond all party loyalties. One only wishes that his leadership could have been made effective more directly, and that he could have led an effective political movement.

Reinhold Niebuhr

The Charles Jones Case

Elsewhere in this issue is an article setting down some of the facts in the controversy centering around the ministry of the Rev. Charles Jones in the Presbyterian Church of Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Since that article was written, two further developments of significance have taken place. On February 24th, after several attempts to induce or force Mr. Jones to resign his pulpit, the Commission of the Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relation between Mr. Jones and the congregation, effective March 1st. (Mr. Jones remains a minister in good standing in the Presbytery.) On March 22nd, the Commission removed from office all of the members of the Session of the church, effective April 1st. The only recourse now open to Mr. Jones and the church and its officers is to appeal to the Synod for a review of the case.

There are two aspects of this incident which seem to us particularly worthy of note. One has to do with the vagueness of the charges which the Commission leveled against Mr. Jones. One may suspect that the ill-defined complaints registered about Mr. Jones' theology and polity actually cover up an uneasiness about the social liberalism, particularly in the area of race relations, which has characterized Mr. Jones' ministry. The Commission owes it to Mr. Jones, to his parishioners, and to the Church as a whole to make clear exactly what its objection to Mr. Jones is. If this is not done, the impression remains inescapable that the real issue is not being discussed.

The second concerns the basis upon which one is to evaluate any man's ministry. The profound impact which Mr. Jones' ministry has made upon the moral and spiritual life of Chapel Hill is attested to by the warm support he has received from the members of his own church, from other clergy in the town, and from the entire Chapel Hill community, both within and without the University.

With reference to a ministry whose zeal has touched a community in the way in which Charles Jones' has, and has indeed inspired the whole South and the whole nation—what is one to say about rigorous theological orthodoxy? Surely not that it is of no importance; yet surely not either that it is the sole criterion for the evaluation of a faithful disciple and minister of Jesus Christ. Experience should have taught us long ago that Church does ill when it attempts to define itself and its mission simply by reference to certain theological yardsticks. Living theology is the expression of the meeting of the living Church with the living God. (Yes, if you will, "doctrines are affirmations that grow out of an individual's or a nation's religious experience.") To the life of the Church Charles Jones has contributed and will continue to contribute much.

John W. Turnbull

Christian Faith and Social Action

Daniel D. Williams

Our topic is the theological basis of Christian social action. All theology requires that we risk our being, our minds, and our thoughts in the activities of the Christian church and in Christian action. We cannot get our theology apart from action. There are three special reasons why we need to consider especially the theology of social action.

First, the social gospel movement of which we are grateful heirs, did not have a very thoroughly thought out theological structure. Its theology was of a fairly simple and too exclusively moralistic type. We need to deal much more adequately with the full complexity of the problem of Christian action in society than the social gospel movement did.

Second, there is a kind of Christian social action going on in our society at the present time which has a new theology and which raises for us very serious questions. Movements like Spiritual Mobilization and the groups behind *Christian Economics* have social and economic programs which appear under a Christian guise and which are defended on Biblical and theological grounds. We have to meet them where they are. We can no longer assume that all Christian social action agrees in general with the kind of liberal social program which the social gospel leaders defended. We need to establish our theological ground in dealing with this new theology of a Christian economic program. We ought not to be deceived by the naiveté and superficiality of much of this theological defense of laissez-faire economics. It is naive and superficial if you like, but the problems involved are by no means simple.

Third, there is the difficult problem of the Christian church in social action. If the Christian church is to be the Body of Christ bringing the broken communities of mankind into a new relationship in Christ then the question of how and where that Church can take sides in the arena of social conflict is a difficult one. We will never be done with trying to make plain to ourselves how it is that as church groups we can take sides in social conflict and at the same time remain the Church. My theme is that we have to do it, but it involves a continual and prayerful theological struggle.

I

All human life is social action. Human life is social and to act at all is to act in a social relationship with others. But by social action in its specific sense we mean any voluntary and deliberate effort to try to change the social relationships in which men live. Social action means acting within the social order so to modify or change it in some direction. We are inquiring for the Christian basis for the ground, the ends, and the spirit of such action. I shall state first what I take to be the Christian basis of social action and then relate this basis to three pairs of concepts by which it has to be worked out.

The Christian basis for social action is found in what God has done for us and to us in Jesus Christ. It is the action of God with which we have to deal. That action is God's personal, powerful, living Word expressed in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ the meaning of life has been broken open as nowhere else. This act of God is something more than the teaching of Jesus, although it involves a moral teaching which is the summing up of the prophetic moral tradition and the transformation of it. But it is more than a moral teaching. It is a living relationship which God has established with us through a personal life. When we say "Jesus Christ" we do not

simply mean something which is bounded by the life of Jesus as we have it testified to in the Bible. Jesus Christ gathers up for us the whole of our experience of God in his dealings with the Hebrew people. It includes the word of his prophets, in their struggle for righteouness, justice, and mercy. This word points forward to its consummation in Jesus Christ who stands at the pinnacle and the center of this history. "Jesus Christ" gathers up for us the history of God's dealing with his people after the life and death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus Christ for us is the reality whom we know again and again in our experience in the Church where God's Holy Spirit is present to us, renewing our knowledge of who Jesus Christ is. Jesus Christ is the act of God which gathers up and clarifies all human groping after truth and justice. There are fragments of the meaning of life, of man's understanding of God and what he requires of us, everywhere in human experience. When we say God acts in Jesus Christ we do not mean that he is something detached from universal human experience but that Christ is the personal Word in whom God has disclosed who he really is. The universal human quest has had thrown up in it this new and decisive light. This is not an absolutely clear light which answers every question or clarifies every problem immediately, but a light by which now we have to see everything else. Christ is the center from whom now all life is illuminated.

When we look now at three pairs of terms by which Christians have tried to express what God has said to us and done for us in Jesus Christ we find at the center of our faith this personal embodiment of the Word. The three pairs of terms are first, God and man; second, grace and sin; third, the Kingdom of God and vocation.

II

Jesus Christ is the basis of our understanding of God. We understand God as the God who acts, and history as the field of his action. The Christian God is the living Lord of human history. We are absolutely dependent upon him for our being and for the meaning of life. We are called to serve and to act in the history which is the field of his own working.

The God of the Bible acts first in creation. Creation is activity, an assertion of power with purpose. God acts in raising up a people in history who have a special dealing with him in their historical experience. He acts with this people and against them. He raises up prophets by the power of his word to speak for his people and to them, to point to his work in history. He makes and breaks the nations.

God acts in Jesus Christ. Here God asserts his power in history to judge, to break open, to restore the true meaning of life. It is with this God that we have to do in the Christian faith, not merely a "first being", nor an abstract law, or principle, or ideal; but with the primary, sovereign, and inescapable Lord of all creation and all history.

Man as God's creature is made for a life with a certain structure. He is created for a life in community with God and his fellows. Community is not a thin word; it is a word of dimensions. It means a community of worship. Man as bearer of the image of God is created to stand before him in adoration and reverence. It is a community of freedom for man is intended to be a responsible, personal servant of God and his fellows. It is a community of personal, mutual membership so that the meaning of life is to be found in giving and receiving in relations with God and our fellows. Men are not individuals who happen to be gathered together for certain purposes because they prefer it that way. God gathers us together. He has created us members one of another. To be a person then is to be one who has his life only by giving and receiving in a community of life. This is not a statement of an ideal to be achieved. It is a statement of the inescapable character of our existence. So Paul writes to the Corinthians, "What have you that you

have not received?" i.e., your very faith, the meaning of your life, is something which you have only as a member of the community of sharing. Paul's image of the Christian church reinforces the point. His favorite image is that of the organism in which if one member suffers all suffer. There is a difference of function but the meaning of life for each member is that he serves the life of the other members.

There is one consequence of this view of God and man of especial significance for our view of social action. When we come to the basic principles of social action, the moral principles which guide the formation of the common life, such as freedom, justice, equality, and brotherhood, we need to see that these terms receive a new and a qualified meaning within the Christian faith which is not identical with the purely rationalistic, legalistic, and idealistic definitions of them. Nearly all men in the world today identify their goal as freedom. Everyone says he is fighting for justice. Equality is somewhat more debatable. Certainly brotherhood is generally accepted as good. All systems of ethics in the great central tradition have affirmed human brotherhood. But Christian understanding of freedom, justice, equality, and brotherhood, while it may begin some agreement with the definition of those terms which it finds in the social body generally, must always be allowed its own definition of these terms.

Take freedom for example. What is freedom? It can be defined in all kinds of ways as a political order or ethical value. It may mean freedom of speech as defined in particular, constitutional arrangements enforced in a legal system. It may mean freedom of economic enterprise as that is actually worked out and established in an economic system, constitutionally guaranteed and legally enforced. But when the Christian speaks of freedom he means the freedom to be a member of the community of mankind. He means freedom to use his life in the give and take with others upon whom he depends and who depend upon him. A Christian definition of freedom should never be equated with an abstract, rationalistic definition of freedom which leaves out of account the conception of man as created to use his freedom in a community of sharing and serving. In the Christian view, if man tries to use his freedom outside his responsibility to the whole social body he only loses it.

So also with justice. Dr. Niebuhr and others have made us see that the rational and legal orders of justice are always something less than what Christians mean when they talk about love. Christian love makes us members one of another. Its spirit sacrificially goes out to serve the neighbor. All human schemes of justice fall short of that spirit.

In the Bible, as Paul Ramsey has made clear, *God's justice, that is his righteousness, is his love, his mercy, and his forgiveness.* When the Christian deals with the standards of justice in society he may find much that is valuable in general definitions of justice as these are worked out in ethical or legal theory and in constitutional structures. But the Christian knows that ultimate justice is something more than any of these human orders. Ultimate justice means life in the one community of membership with one another under God. Justice which is other than love is less than what we ultimately understand God's justice to be.

We can make a similar analysis of equality. Equality can be defined in an abstract and purely rationalistic manner so that it may mean simply equal opportunity for all to assert themselves and let the consequences fall where they may. This conception of equality is that everybody starts equally and the one who runs the fastest wins the prize. Or equality may mean equal membership in one monolithic social body or classless order where there is in theory no special privilege, no distinction, no individual freedom. The Christian conception of equality is opposed to both of these views. The Christian conception means equal access to personal sharing with one another and with God. It means equal opportunity to be a person who gives and

shares his life along with all the others in the community. This may very well involve real inequalities of income, or social status, or of power within the social body. The Christian view does not look just for a single monolithic order as does the Marxist, but rather for a "family order", in which equality is a living thing and not an abstract imposition of uniformity.

Our first pair of terms, God and man, has given us the basis for social action. We know whom we serve and what essentially we are to be when we understand God's Word in Christ.

III

The second pair of terms is grace and sin. The Christian account of man is given in the light of the fact that man is not what he is created to be. We take as the theme of this section the late Archbishop Temple's words, "The supreme importance of every man is that he is the brother for whom Christ died." No Christian theory of social action can be arrived at simply by saying what we ought to be and declaring, "Become that." It looks first at what we actually are, at our separation from one another and from God, and asks what we ought to do in our kind of history which is a history of sin and grace. This means that this human history in which God is the supreme actor involves our separation from God. This human community of membership with one another is blighted, thwarted, broken, and we are, all of us, in the brokenness and the estrangement. History has to be seen as the field in which God is acting. But he acts as he does to save men who are estranged from him and from one another.

There are four specific consequences of this way of looking at human history. The first is this: Sin, by which we mean not simply moral wrong doing but estrangement and isolation from community with God and our neighbor, involves us all. The problem of Christian social action is not basically the problem of finding the good men to repair the damage done in history by the bad men. That is a subordinate problem. I will acknowledge its truth in a moment, but that is not where we begin. The problem of Christian social action is not to find the pure moral position from which good men may do good things. It is to discover the way in which we ought to act in a society where all are estranged from one another.

This is a point at which the social gospel theology was not deep enough. If we do not begin here then what we do in Christian social action is to set ourselves up as the righteous against the sinners and thus increase our actual estrangement from others and from God. Some of you know a Presbyterian minister in the South, Charles Jones of North Carolina. He addressed the Inter-Seminary Conference a few years ago about his work in the area of racial prejudice and tension. He said that we who take sides on ethical issues very often give the impression to the people whom we are trying to change that we love the group for whom we are pleading more than we do those to whom we are speaking. That is fatal to our effectiveness and yet it is very common. It is very easy for us, seeing injustice and identifying ourselves with the victims of injustice, to love the victims more than those who have sinned against them. It is not easy to love those who have sinned against the victims of the injustice. We can do this only in grace, but this is where Christ has us begin. And if we do not begin here Christian social action finally falls into a self righteousness which destroys its distinctive power. Every one of us knows some person who has thrown himself fully and even courageously into projects of social action, all of it concealing the fact that he really does not love anyone and is incapable of being loved. We are rightly suspicious of people who "love all mankind" easily. Usually that pose masks a deep resentment against all men or at least against some. We begin then with our common involvement in sin and estrangement, knowing that outward goodness may be the mask of a deep isolation and that a little goodness may conceal from us our real evil.

The second consequence is that every concrete social program has to be determined by the fact that we are sinners as well as good men. Therefore, every concrete social program has to be judged in the light of its actual consequences for our kind of existence. We are not looking for a pure, moral harmony in history. We are not looking for a Christian social program about which no questions can be raised. We are not, I should say, looking for the perfect or ideal Christian social system. We are looking for that kind of social system which will best serve the human community in view of the fact that men are actually sinners. Reinhold Niebuhr's famous word that "man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary" is exactly appropriate here. Every social program must be examined with an awareness of the relativities involved. Every social program will achieve something less than the full community of men as Christians understand that. This view may help us to avoid what the late Archbishop Temple characterized as "bleating fatuously about love" when the actual problems with which we have to deal are the practical issues of justice and power in a broken and sinful world. At the same time we say that all Christian social action depends upon faith in grace. There are new possibilities of brotherhood in every situation. No situation is absolutely hopeless. There is a new order of life always ready to come into being. As Christians we act in the light of both our knowledge of sin and our faith in grace.

The third consequence is that when Christians act in the world of conflict, it is inevitable that sometimes they will conceal as well as reveal their Christian witness in acting. To take sides in social conflict is something we must do, but to take sides means that from some you will inevitably conceal your Christian motive and your Christian witness. To some you will become the "enemy". We must try in all ways, even in the midst of war, to say and to do the things which will give a Christian witness, but we have to accept the fact that in Christian social action our activities may hide our motives from one another. To many of his time Jesus appeared to be a destructive agitator, threatening the established order of moral standards. He had to risk this.

The fourth consequence is that Christians in social action ought always to be seeking ways to open up new possibilities of reconciliation in the social body. In Christian social action there is a large place for education, pastoral care, reconciling work, holding together the people who are divided in the social, political, or economic struggle. That is not to say that this is the only kind of Christian social action. But social action which does not give a large place to the work of mediation and reconciliation is less than Christian.

We may illustrate the implication of this second pair of terms, sin and grace, with reference to the problem of property. The Christian view of property tends to be one of the great undiscussed problems. It is discussed at a certain level, but too often a certain naive and idealistic moralism betrays us. We have not provided in our churches a basic Christian discussion of the meaning of private property so that we could begin to think in Christian terms about what it means to have a bank account, or not to have one, or to live in a suburb or to live in a blighted area. If at the present time business men are persuaded by the naive theologies of free enterprise, if they are being taken in by the notion that Christian charity means just personal giving by the rich to the poor and that Christian freedom means the freedom to make as much money as one can by legal means, it is partly because we have not provided an adequate Christian, theological, and Biblical interpretation of private property by which we might resist and see through such a superficial theology. If there is an estrangement between those who stand in the social gospel tradition and the business community it may be partly because we who support the welfare state idea have not

made plain enough what we are driving toward. We have not made clear what our conception of private property and private enterprise within the welfare state might be. We have not made clear that we are not looking for a monolithic order in which all power, all control, and all property are held by the state alone.

We need a Christian doctrine of private property interpreted within our faith that men are members one of another and interpreted within the history of sin and grace. Can we make it clear that wealth is both a social as well as an individual product and that the Christian meaning of wealth must be that whatever a man's property is, it is his means of relating himself to his neighbor? Wealth in its inner meaning is a sacrament of God's gift to man and of our gifts to one another. In the history of sin and grace our wealth becomes a "sacrament" also of our isolation from one another. "What have you that you have not received?" asks St. Paul. We ought to see how our property is that which separates us from our brother, and to understand that in its essence it should unite us to him.

All life has a sacramental quality in the Christian faith. Because of sin, all the things we call goods are involved in the tragedy of human lovelessness and hate. But all things stand within the sphere of God's redemptive working. Christian social action takes place then in a world where all material and spiritual things are to be brought into the service of the just and loving human community, and yet where sin and its consequences remain stubbornly present. Every social problem itself becomes for the Christian a sacramental sign pointing both to our potentialities as children of God and to our sin with which only his forgiveness can deal.

IV

The third pair of terms is "vocation and the Kingdom". The question of social action is "Now what are we to do?" How do we find precisely how and where as Christians we ought to act to open the way for the community of men under God? Sometimes the demand of God is very plain. This man wounded by the roadside needs help. We are called to help him. Sometimes there is a clear case of ruthless discrimination on some arbitrary basis against another human being, separating God's people from one another. Then the call of God is clear. Denounce the injustice, reconstruct society. There are some social evils that one can identify so clearly as destroying every meaning of human community that one can clearly and simply set himself against them. This is the way that many Christians felt about the Nazi state.

There is however a large area of difficult decisions of risk, of choice between political and social programs which are mixtures of good and bad. Much social action involves taking sides where there isn't any simple clear choice. How does the Christian keep his sanity and his humility and still his resoluteness in a history where there are so many complex problems? The answer lies in the Christian doctrine of vocation. God calls us to be what we are, to act where we are in this kind of a history, to serve him in this kind of a world because he is already acting in it and in Christ has already established a new order within it. We are to do the best we can in the light of our knowledge that often there isn't any purely good way to act. Our "reasonable service" is precisely to give our life up to God in this world where good and evil are strangely mixed. Only such a conception of our Christian vocation can save us from the intolerable pretension of believing that we are "building the Kingdom of God". One really wonders quite how that phrase could possibly have gotten used as widely as it was in the last generation. If anything is clear now, surely it is that we do not build the Kingdom of God. We build social structures, political, legal, and ecclesiastical structures in the light of the Kingdom of God and out of the faith that God's Reign

comes through his power. He is establishing his Kingdom in his own way. Our work is to serve God in removing some obstacles so that he may build it in judgment upon us and give it to us by his grace. Only this can pull Christian action out of that moral desperation which finally ends in cynicism. Only this can enable us to offer up our lives resolutely, deliberately, and sacrificially as God gives us strength and grace to do what needs to be done as best we can see it with firmness in the right as he gives us to see the right. Christian social action then is our witness to the Kingdom. It arises in our dependence upon God's grace which transcends all human power.

* * * * * *

If we are to have a Christian theology of social action it must come out of the struggle of social action itself. The issues of our time are there where history is being made, where the human community is broken, where the future of the lives of the millions of folk is being determined. The only way to a Christian theology of social action is to serve God in Christ as we know him in the midst of the human struggle and not apart from it.

Announcing . . .

CHRISTIAN ACTION SPRING RETREAT

May 15 - 16, 1953

The Cathedral House, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 110th Street, New York City

Program (this is the correct schedule rather than the one released earlier):

Friday afternoon and evening, May 15:

4:00 P.M. — Dr. Robert Fitch, Dean and Professor of Ethics, Pacific School of Religion, and Visiting Professor of Ethics, Union Theological Seminary: "The Theology of American Political Parties"

Discussion

6:00 P.M. — Dinner at the Cathedral House (by advance reservation only; write Christian Action at 537 West 121st St., New York, or telephone MOnument 2-8005)

7:30 P.M. — Dr. Paul Tillich, Professor of Systematic Theology, Union Theological Seminary: "Some Christian and Secular Bases of Culture and Politics"

Discussion

9:00 P.M. — Service of Worship, conducted by the Very Rev. James A. Pike, Dean, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine

Saturday morning, May 16:

9:30 A.M. — Dr. Paul Lehmann, Associate Professor of Applied Christianity, Princeton Theological Seminary: "Theological and Strategic Considerations in the Problem of Civil Liberties"

Discussion

11:30 A.M. — Adjournment

A Communion Service

Marvin Halverson

Alienation between worship and social action is a stereotype which happily is being recognized as unjustifiable. The fundamental unity of faith and order with life and work is becoming apparent to a degree not manifest in recent times. But expressions of such a comprehensive understanding in recent Protestant liturgical thought and practice have been meager. The accompanying order of the Communion of the Lord's Supper represents one expression of the renewed concern for liturgy in Protestantism. It has been used in some form in a suburban church, in a working class parish, and in the weekly celebration of the Communion in a theological seminary chapel. It was in the last context that the order assumed its present form. With the cooperation of James Hastings Nichols, a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper was initiated at the Chicago Theological Seminary several years ago and continues to involve new generations of theological students.

In the seminary chapel the order has been celebrated without a sense of haste in thirty minutes and it has been used in a parish church for a full service of a little more than one hour. It presupposes a free-standing altar or table allowing the minister to face the people, particularly in order that the Manual Acts may be visible to all worshippers. It is one of the misfortunes of Protestant worship that the public and visible "breaking" of bread and "pouring" of wine which was recovered in the Calvinist reformation has been abandoned, with ministers huddled over "altars" obscuring the rich meaning of this action. This order further presupposes a wise selection of hymns which enable the congregation to say that which is appropriate at the particular point in the service. Experience suggests that in the absence of adequate hymnals supplements can be developed and helpfully used.

This particular order, of course, does not constitute a definitive or adequate form for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. It does represent an attempt to include several emphases which because of the infidelities of our witness to the Gospel have been lost or at best obscured in our common worship. This order is not so much a return to Reformed or early Church practices as a recapitulation of their Biblically grounded worship in ways which make the liturgy a common language for our day. It is to such a task that de Rougemont called Protestants in a singularly incisive article in *Christendom* several years ago, "A Common Language". As recognition grows of need for new liturgical expressions today, our common search and discovery may disclose how a contemporary liturgy will speak with the ancient traditions of Christendom in ways which are significant for Christian action.

Perhaps the first observation to make about the accompanying order is that it emphasizes action rather than feeling. Instead of a service in which minister and choir induce feelings in an "audience" seeking a "worship experience", this order emphasizes corporate participation and action. It recognizes that Christian worship is fundamentally an act on the part of God's people gathered in a particular place. As persons, they bring their sins, their fears, their failures. But primarily they come in the knowledge that they have been made members of a new community, bringing recollections of past blessings and present mercies. Most supremely in the Communion of the Lord's Supper is this true. Here the Christian community is gathered up in an act which reaches back to its institution by a young Jew the night before he died and looks to the future generations of one's kin and fellow believers until the Messianic banquet in God's Kingdom.

Gregory Dix has noted the character of early Christian observance of the Lord's Supper as centering in *action* rather than feeling and that the early Christian came to the Communion not primarily as a learner and certainly not as one seeking a "psychological thrill". He did not even come from a deep longing for personal communion with God. This was fulfilled more in other ways. He came to the Communion oftentimes at personal risk to *do* something.

That same understanding of the early Church has been expressed in our day by P. T. Forsyth, the English Congregationalist, in this way: "The symbolism of the Communion did not lie in the elements but in the action, the entire action — word and deed. It lay in action first on Christ's part, then on the part of the Church. It was the *action* that was symbolical, the breaking rather than the bread, the outpouring rather than the wine . . . We do not enact a small "mystery" or tableau of Christ's sacrifice; but Christ, the Redeemer, in his Church's act gives himself and his saving act to us anew (to us, not to God); and we give ourselves anew to him in responsive faith. When you reflect after Communion, 'What have I done today?' say to yourself, 'I have done more than on any busiest day of the week. I have yielded myself to take part with the Church in Christ's finished Act of Redemption which is greater than the making of the world.' "

The vocation of the people of God is fundamental in this act. It is not something done by a happenstance association of individuals but rather a task for a new society of persons whose responsibility does not end with showing forth its Lord in breaking bread and in sharing the cup. The vocation of the New Israel is focused in this act of the Lord's Supper but its consequences flow into every area of life. For this community in its ritual act affirms publicly that its Lord is lord of creation and the nations. It is not unimportant that, as the conception of Christian action has moved from individual responsibility to a sense of corporate witness and vocation for the Church as a whole, this understanding of the Communion should be recovered, as it were, to illumine, deepen and sustain this awareness of vocation in our world.

Throughout this order the eucharistic note is emphasized in contrast to the penitential. Most of the liturgical traditions of Protestantism inherit the Western medieval penitential emphasis. It has been transmitted into our culture through the established liturgies and pietism. Calvinism, which recovered the eucharistic theme, never completely lost by Eastern Orthodoxy, has been ravaged by so many divergent tendencies that its initial endowment has been badly distorted. While the Communion speaks to man in terms of his person at the deepest level, one must never forget that this fallen world of nature and humanity belongs to God. As Forsyth put it, "We are in a world which has been redeemed; and not in one which is being redeemed at a pace varying with the world's thought and progress, or the Church's thought and work."

It is from such a knowledge that the Church obtains its strength to witness, redeem, and transform all the world of human, social, economic, and political relationships. There is a sense in which the prayer, "and here we present unto thee ourselves, soul and body", properly follows the Communion, for the response of each Christian person and the Church to Christ's action extends from the Table of the Lord to the table in each home and our common life and tasks.

This note is implied in the accompanying order at the point of the offering and the thanksgiving following Communion. The practice of bringing bread and wine to the Lord's Table to be used in the Lord's Supper is an ancient one. Although fully perpetuated only by Orthodoxy, it still exists in vestigial forms in other traditions, as in some of the churches in Scotland. As a child I remember the offering procession in a middle-western Norwegian Lutheran church on Communion Sundays. On that occasion each male member of the congre-

gation would leave at the altar an offering of ten cents with which was purchased the bread and wine for the Lord's Supper. This people's offering is being reappropriated in differing traditions. It is rich with symbolic meaning for Christian action.

Speaking of its recovery within the Iona Community, George McLeod says: "At times of sacrament — along with the sacred elements, disparate but conjoined — there was also blessed the common bread of their daily living. Forward from their dining hall they carried the loaves from the refectory table, to be eaten later at their midday meal. And this we have now recovered here.

"From our Community House and from its kitchen; from Youth House and from our fishing station in Mull come loaves; forward in the tramp of the great Procession. And as we sit at dinner-time we will share the bread so blessed. It is but a symbol, but it protests the Truth we need. For, as we there partake of the blessed bread, what vistas rise before our eyes. The baker who has baked it; the ship's crew that carried the wheat; the riveter who built the ship; the wheat pool in Canada; the market in Liverpool . . . the whole vast complex of our modern life circles round the fact of Bread. Even as the world's most modern tragedy circles round the lack of it . . . It is our common life — our international, yet common life — that must be changed. And it is only God who can change it."

But in all this there is peril. The offering must always be seen as the offering of our brokenness, our sin and our perverse humanity. We do not offer ourselves to God as any merit nor do we offer Christ. We present a broken world and humanity praying that the Church may receive and share the life of Christ in suffering, death, and resurrection, "of watching for his coming, and of submitting its life and work to his obedience."

The fulfillment of God's purpose is promised in the supper of the Lord's Table and we look forward to its consummation in the Kingdom of God. But the eschatological note, of which the act itself insistently reminds one, does not cut the nerve of Christian action. Rather, the ground of faith and the assurance of hope for God's righteousness is present in the sacrament wherein Christ's promises are sealed to us and his people forever.

An Order of Holy Communion

Prelude

Sentences

What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward us? We will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. We will pay our vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.

Hymn

Summary of the Law

Hear the Summary of the Law as our Lord Jesus Christ has given it: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities in the light of these commandments, who shall be able to stand before thee? Therefore, let each one present himself before the Lord and make to him a humble confession of his sins, following with his heart and voice these words:

Prayer of General Confession

(Minister and People)

Almighty God, our Father in heaven, we confess that we have sinned against thee and against our neighbor. We have called evil good, and good evil. We have walked in darkness rather than in the light. We have named the name of Christ but have not departed from iniquity. Have mercy upon us, we beseech thee. Grant us forgiveness of our sins and remember not against us our offences. Cleanse us by thy Holy Spirit, and aid us by thy heavenly grace, that we may approach thy Holy Table with quickened conscience and hearts made pure, and receive thy gifts without sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Promises of Grace

Receive the promises of grace and assurance of pardon given to all those who truly repent and believe:

This is the covenant that I will make, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into

their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. For ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn

Prayer for Illumination

O Spirit of the living God, who dwellest in thy Church; who art holiness, wisdom and might; come thou, and fill the hearts of thy faithful people; and kindle within them the fire of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Lesson

Psalm (read responsively and concluded with the Gloria Patri)

New Testament Lesson

Hymn

The Sermon

The Offering

Remembering that the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein: Let us present unto God portions of our food and drink and money, beseeching him that he so bless field and vineyard, mine and factory, kitchen and office, school and court, that all this world of nature and humanity represented by these gifts may be redeemed and restored to the kingdom of his Christ and his Church renew her obedience to His will.

(The offering having been collected, the people rise as the bread and wine and money are brought by the deacons to the Lord's Table during the singing of the Doxology, and remain standing through the Manual Acts.)

The Eucharistic Prayer

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: God lift up our hearts.

Minister: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People: He alone is worthy of thanks and praise.

It is right and our joyful duty to give thanks unto thee, O Lord, who didst create the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is; who didst make man in thine own image, and whose tender mercies are over all thy works.

Therefore with angels and archangels, with patriarchs, and prophets, apostles and saints, martyrs, and the spirits of just men made perfect we laud and magnify thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee and saying (singing):

Minister and People:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

We bless thee that thou didst choose thy people Israel to bear a fuller knowledge of thy righteousness and mercy; that thou didst engage thyself to them in covenant, sending them the law and the prophets that they might return unto thee and know mercy.

Most of all, O Father, we praise thee that in the fulness of time thou didst send thy very son Jesus Christ to covenant for thee a new people, that we might be renewed and raised up in thy image. We remember before thee in joy his teaching and healing, his trial and bloody death, and his most triumphant resurrection to reign with thee throughout eternity. For his rule in the Church through the Holy Spirit and the promise of his coming again in power, we give thee thanks.

Wherefore, we commemorate our Lord Jesus Christ, who the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, he took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we do show forth the Lord's death till he come.

Not of our own worthiness, but emboldened by thy promises through Jesus Christ, we invoke thy presence among us; and we pray thee to bless and sanctify us and these thine own gifts of bread and wine that we may receive by faith Christ crucified for us; that he may dwell in us and we in him.

And here, with this remembrance of the sacrifice and victory of thy son, we offer and present unto thee ourselves, soul and body, property and vocation, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; praying that all we who are partakers of this holy communion in fellowship with all the faithful in heaven and on earth may find our peace in thy will evermore.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit be the glory and the praise both now and evermore. Amen.

(Here intercession may be made for Christ's Church, this parish and congregation, and all mankind.)

And now as our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us, we pray: Our Father who art in heaven. Hollowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

The Manual Acts

And now according to the example, institution, and command of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the showing forth of him, we do this: who the same night in which he was betrayed

Took bread (here the minister shall take the bread into his hands), and when he had given thanks, he brake it (here the minister shall break the bread), and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, he took the cup (here the minister shall raise the cup), saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For, says the apostle, as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come.

Come, for all things are ready.

The Communion

(Hymns may be sung while the people partake at the Table.)

(The people shall come forward and stand around the Lord's Table in groups of as many as can be accommodated. The minister shall deliver the elements to the people with these words)

At the Bread: The bread of heaven in Christ Jesus.

At the Cup: The cup of the new covenant in Christ Jesus.

or

At the Bread: Christ hath died for us, that we might live with him.

At the Cup: Jesus said: I will drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom.

(The minister shall dismiss each table with some such scripture as, Jesus said: Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Go in peace. (or) If I go away from you, I shall come again. Go in peace.)

Prayer

Our heavenly Father, we give thee praise and thanks that upon us the unworthy thou dost confer so rich a benefit as to bring us into the communion of thy son Jesus Christ. Now also grant us grace, that we may never be unmindful of these things; but bearing them about, engraven on our hearts, may advance and grow as thy people in that faith which is effectual unto every good work; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn

Benediction

Postlude

Among Those Present

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Storm in Chapel Hill

William R. Sengel

What responsibility does the Church hold for sustaining and providing a free pulpit for its prophetic ministers? This is the fundamental question raised by a series of events during the past year centering in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Charles M. Jones, pastor of the Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church, was asked to resign last December by a ten man Judicial Commission of Orange Presbytery. The request came after a long series of investigations into every detail of the life, work, and theological convictions of the ministers and the officers of the church.

The Judicial Commission, with power to act as Presbytery, was authorized to carry out the investigations after Presbytery's Executive Council received a petition from twenty persons in Chapel Hill asking for a second Presbyterian church, in their words, "to meet more adequately the spiritual and pastoral needs of our community". Only seven of the twenty were members of Jones' church, which readily concurred with the request.

A study of this case, including the Commission's reports to Presbytery and to the Chapel Hill congregation, leaves the disturbing impression that the distortion of truth, use of innuendo, and the not so subtle revelations of prejudice and bias which continue to mark current Congressional investigations are now being used effectively within the citadels of the Church.

After receiving the petition for the new church, Presbytery's Executive Council conferred with the church officers, ostensibly to get their opinion on the proposal. But the Council proceeded to attack Mr. Jones, claiming that North Carolina Presbyterians had "lost confidence in" the student program under present leadership. Claiming a "deluge" of letters in support of their views, the Council could produce only two, one of which was four years old and admitted by its writer to be irrelevant to the case at hand. The Council then met with Mr. Jones and suggested that he quietly accept the next call coming his way and bow out of Chapel Hill. Mr. Jones declined.

It was at this point, last June, that Presbytery set up the Judicial Commission, a majority of whose members were also members of the Executive Council which had already passed judgment.

The Commission's charges against Jones were vague, citing no faults serious enough to merit specific charges of heresy. It has also been pointed out that Mr. Jones' detailed theological statement on the floor of Presbytery which met in January to receive the Commission report, met with no objections from the Presbyterys. (Similar charges against the entire group of church officers with the request that they also resign, were dropped when the officers proposed a course of study for themselves in Presbyterian Standards.)

Said the Commission report, "This [Jones'] philosophy might be variously expressed: that being a Christian is more important than being a Presbyterian; or that doctrinal radicalism is of less importance than whether or not individuals shall be free to worship God as they please; or that doctrines are affirmations that grow out of an individual's or a nation's religious experience; or that a man's experience is the material out of which he formulates his doctrines about God."

Asked by the congregation of the Chapel Hill church, which has voted by a margin of 156 to 14 its confidence in its pastor, to clarify its charges, the Commission has refused, and continues to ask for Mr. Jones' resignation on the grounds that "restoring

of confidence in the work being done here in this church is a matter of great importance, and according to our judgment it cannot be restored apart from a change in pastoral leadership."

In its report, the Commission also offered their full assistance in the improvement of the facilities and equipment of the Chapel Hill church if its recommendations were carried out. To this, some eighty members of the congregation replied in a signed statement: "In other circles an offer of this kind is generally referred to as a 'bribe'. Our response to this degrading proposal was that we were not for sale."

The pattern of this case is all too clear. Like inquisitors in all ages, the Orange Presbytery Commission seems sure of its own position. In a statement aside from the official reports of the Commission, its chairman was quoted as saying Jones should resign "for the glory of God and the honor of the church".

Jones has long been the target for attacks by various Southern churchmen. He has been an able and courageous leader among Christians in the South concerned to make a prophetic witness in the face of often severe social tensions. The Chapel Hill pastor is past chairman and active participant in The Fellowship of Southern Churchmen. While attacks upon him have often gained the greater publicity, it must be pointed out that he has received warm support not only from his congregation but from many Protestant clergymen including several Southern Presbyterians, and particularly from students at the University of North Carolina. In an editorial in *The Daily Tar Heel* last December, Editor Walt Dear wrote: "To me, the Church should be not just a place for weekly communicants and Sunday Christians. Rev. Jones has made his church a rich center of spiritual life . . . . The Commission is throwing away a vital, growing religious community."

Editor Dear also raised a question being asked by many close to the Chapel Hill scene when he wondered in print whether the fact that Charles Jones is a man actually trying to carry out the implications of the Christian faith was not really of more concern to the Commission than his theology.

The call to Presbyterian clergymen, in which Presbytery as a whole must concur, reads in part as follows: "We . . . do earnestly call you to undertake the pastoral office in this congregation, promising you, in discharge of your duty, all proper support, encouragement and obedience in the Lord." In the light of that call, the statement by Dr. Frank P. Graham, former President of the University of North Carolina and a recent United States Senator, and an elder in the Chapel Hill church, presents a convincing witness. Said Graham:

> "In the worldwide struggle for the loyalties and souls of men between Christianity and the spiritual forces of freedom on the one side, and totalitarianism and tyranny on the other side, Charles Jones is in the front lines as an evangelist of Jesus Christ, preaching and ministering, humbly, joyously and unafraid. In correcting his and our faults, let us not strike him down. Repentance for shortcomings in our observance of the rules and rituals must not cause any recanting or retreat in basic faith and programs."

The implications of the Chapel Hill case are plain. The pressures of conformity's deadly hand continue to mount, with the penalty for resistance still a stoning of the prophets. The churches face no more urgent task than that of standing up to their responsibility for preserving the religious liberty of their ministers and members in the face of growing restrictions.

Experiment in Suburbia

Robert W. Lynn

The Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church is located at the corner of Montview Boulevard and Dahlia Street in Denver, in the residential area of Park Hill — in the very heart of suburban America. It represents, along with other similar churches, a very significant frontier for the "social action" movement.

What follows, in the form of a few preliminary remarks, is *not* a new "social action" strategy designed to open this frontier. The impasse which the "social action" movement has reached in attempting to penetrate the suburban church, will never be resolved by a clever new angle, or a different set of social action materials. These are tentative suggestions, emerging out of a single year's ministry, which might have a certain bearing upon our future understanding of an approach to the middle class Protestant church.

As one minister out of four in a congregation of over 3800 people, I have had an unusual opportunity in helping to develop a network of study groups throughout the church. It is avowedly a ministry to a minority. The groups are small, varying in size from five to sixteen people. There is no one rigid pattern of makeup of these study groups. Some are made up of housewives, who meet in the morning twice a month; others (usually those with a flexible noon hour) meet in a downtown hotel for their lunch and study. Lately we have been encouraging the creation of couple study groups which meet in various homes.

The intent in forming these groups is made quite clear from the start. They are small communities for learning. The focus of study varies from recent Broadway plays to current theological texts: Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman;* John Marquand's *Point of No Return;* T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party;* Paul Tillich's *The Shaking of the Foundations;* James Hastings Nichols' *Primer for Protestants;* J. B. Phillips' *Your God Is Too Small;* portions of D. M. Baille's *God Was In Christ;* Roland Bainton's *Here I Stand;* Theodore Wedel's *Christianity of Main Street;* Rufus Jones' *A Call to What Is Vital;* and, of course, study in both the Old and the New Testament.

These small communities for learning answer several apparent needs. First, many laymen, and not just the occasional college intellectual, want to extend and renew their education. Though we often accuse the usual middle class congregation of being anti-intellectual, there is, ironically enough, an implicit anti-intellectualism in our assumption that the suburban crowd wants nothing stronger than a "peace of mind" sermon and the *Reader's Digest.* This is not true — at least not true of a certain minority in every church. Such a minority often finds a little elsewhere to challenge and stimulate it. The courses offered in the local extension center are, for the most part, of the "how to do it" variety; e.g., "How to prepare flies for trout fishing", or "Geology for Sunday drivers". Here the churches have an unexplored opportunity to replace the "busy work" of many adult education programs with study groups that recognize the deeply religious questions of these people.

The second function of these communities for learning is to help the layman express his religious questions. Let us take, for example, one incident out of the life of a layman. A junior business executive is going through the harrowing experience of the annual family office banquet, that compulsive ritual of fellowship and "fun". The president's remark, "What makes this company go is the spirit of fun . . . that we have in doing things together", brings a wan smile of appreciation and memory of those

ulcer-provoking days of careful preparation for the boss' visit. But even his suppressed sense of humor cannot ward off the nearby questions, "Why do I put up with this?" "Why am I here?" The oppressive falsity of those words about the "family" will continue to haunt him until he hates himself and the world he lives in.

This is the heart of the matter. His growing sense of alienation from the world (and therefore his flight into political apathy) is not overcome by asking him to study the latest and "best" guide to national and international social issues. He will not be able to act or respond until he understands himself.

This is why the usual point of departure in the study group is a contemporary novel or play such as *Death of a Salesman.* The question, "Who am I?" inevitably precedes the question, "What am I going to do about it?" So it is in the life of the junior executive. In his encounter with Willie Loman he discovers his own loss of identity; and in Charles Gray of *Point of No Return,* he finds an expression of his own anxiety and insecurities. In other words, his questions and half spoken fears are given legitimacy. This is most important.

Once these significant questions are pointed to, then the study group can move on to a study of theology. Often the theological text, particularly Paul Tillich's *The Shaking of the Foundations,* provokes the questions that *Death of a Salesman* could never arouse. The final destination in most of these groups is a scrutiny of the Bible which again refers back to our contemporary situation, and points us to the task of understanding our own culture.

In this regard, I would like to say a word about what kind of social action material is most helpful in understanding our own situation. Isn't it true that the often-labeled "theoretical" work is the most practical or relevant in its impact, while the self-styled "practical" social action study, with its conclusion of "Things you can do", is the most impractical and theoretical? The kinds of so-called "theoretical" study are often much more helpful in inducing self-understanding than is the "practical" social action guide to crucial questions.

There are other derivative consequences of these study groups. First, they tend to develop naturally into groups centering on vocational problems. One group, for example, is almost exclusively made up of doctors. In that kind of setting, an open discussion of national health insurance is more possible than in the forbidding atmosphere of the one-shot forum on social issues. Likewise, another group, mostly lawyers, have come to face squarely their common vocational questions.

Also, the inclusive concern of these groups tends to break down the usual isolation of the traditional "social action" committee within a church. Here is one specific instance. One of the study groups has spent the last two months carefully outlining the whole complex of problems facing the public schools today; the question of adequate taxation, the threat of the right wing attack upon the schools as harboring subversives, and the possible form of religion courses in the public schools. Yet five years ago almost none of these laymen, all conservative businessmen, could have possibly been coralled into a social action meeting.

Finally, these little communities for learning are tending to restore the ministry of the laity. In the coming years we hope to develop lay theologians, doctors and lawyers who can speak out of an informed Christian faith within their professional societies; and lay people to whom a devotional life is not a subtle occupation of saints, but rather a part of a *whole* response to God.

Perhaps the real significance of this new venture does not lie in its particular form. It is important only as it recognizes, however dimly, that a quiet revolution in our attitude toward "social action" has taken place in recent years. David Riesman, in his book *Faces in the Crowd,* suggests that, "In the nineteenth century and well into the

twentieth, two grounds were urged to justify popular participation in politics; self interest and duty." Today, however, these two motivations, although visibly operative in some segments of society, are not enough to prevent the flight from politics into apathy on the part of an increasing number of Americans.

It seems to me that the "social action" movement is, for the most part, still appealing to the motives of "Christian" or civic obligation and self-interest. We have yet to discover the new motives for "social action" that will displace the old. To discover these new grounds of motivation is one of the major challenges facing the members of Christian Action.

A Ministry to Intellectuals

Robert W. Spike

America in general does not like its intellectuals. The natural antipathies that this country of activists has harbored all during its history came to a dramatic showdown in the last election. To be an "egghead" was something to apologize for, or at least to hedge about with all kinds of qualifications. In many ways there are more characteristic breaks in mores between intellectuals and other groups in American society, than between any other classes. Members of the upper class have emerged from the middle class and do not have a long enough heritage to have a separate entity or to have developed a separate set of mores. The lower classes are constantly striving toward middle class standards and rarely think of themselves self consciously as the dispossessed. Thus the American labor movement differs from all other labor movements in that it is almost completely without radical class consciousness. The appeal to workingmen has been to secure their natural rights as members of the self respecting, solid citizenry of the nation.

Intellectuals in America are generally in conscious revolt against the premises of small town American life, which is the norm for the middle class perspective. Whatever their specific discipline or vocation, they tend to share a discomfort about the standards of material security, boosterism, the all-American boy prototype, old fashioned morality, and other shibboleths of the middle class. These characteristics do no more than distinguish the group in a general way, and certainly do not take into account either the positive values held with great devotion by varying groups of intellectuals, or the strong ties that still bind many to the middle class.

The Judson Memorial Church is located on Washington Square in the middle of one of the largest communities of intellectuals in the country, Greenwich Village. The peak days of the creative flowering of the Village intellectuals are past, but the Village is still a haven for the expatriate from the Middle West or the middle class.

For the past four years the Judson Church has tried to create the opportunity for a ministry to this community. It has not concentrated entirely on this one group in the community. In addition to the intellectual, there is the family population of Italian and Irish descent, retaining their own culture and community. The church has a sixty year heritage of social service ministry to the Italian community. Even though many of its pioneer services have been taken over by secular social agencies, it is now serving the community by carrying on a unique program of counselling and group work with delinquent and disturbed boys. In addition, a ministry to students is a part of the church program. This is in response to the challenge of the ever grow-

ing New York University community that also faces on Washington Square. A student co-operative house where non-Christian students can participate in the activities of a Christian community of work and social concern is the center of the program. All the members of the church's group ministry and their families live in the student house.

Thus, although the main thrust of the church's attempt to build a congregation is toward the intellectual Villager, there are enough other interests in the life of the church to keep it from becoming rarefied and precious — a one class church of intellectuals.

The church has felt that it had to do three things in order to open the possibility of ministering to its new constituency: first, to divest itself of all patterns of church organization and routine that are closely related to the suburban and small town church; second, in the community to represent a point of view that interprets social problems in terms of a judgment beyond the historical scene and at the same time stands in the midst of the social crisis; and third, to exercise a strong apologetic function, challenging the diverse philosophical assumptions of our day with the main stream of Christian theology.

These principles have led us into many interesting experiences. In addition to the Sunday morning worship, the only other gatherings of the congregation are in monthly church meetings, Christian doctrine classes, commission meetings or work days. We have no adult Sunday school classes, women's society, men's club, young people's meetings, church family nights. At the monthly church meeting, which is always held around the tables after a common meal on Communion Sunday, all the concerns of the church are up for discussion, and the congregation here makes policy decisions on social action issues and internal church needs. Three commissions of church members act as guardians of the ongoing projects of the church, like the group work with delinquents, the student ministry, and special short term activities of the congregation. The Christian doctrine classes fundamentally serve two purposes. They act as the scene of the teaching offices of the church and also some classes, for those completely outside the church, are evangelistic opportunities. As a congregation we have tackled the problem of a monstrous old, run down building, and have put in countless hours of labor to make it usable and attractive. Two special projects that the church has undertaken this year are community Christmas vespers with W. H. Auden reading from his poem *For the Time Being,* and a contemporary religious art show at the same time as the outdoor art show.

Next year we are planning a more concentrated apologetic attack, rather than relying on the regular services of the church and the informal contacts. For Lent of 1954 we have invited Dr. Tillich for a series of four confrontations, one with a psychiatrist on "The Nature of Man", one with a naturalistic philosopher on "The Idea of God", one with a sociologist on "The Organization of Society", one with an historian on "The Meaning of History". This series will be widely publicized and promoted in the Village.

By far the most important aspect of our church life is the interaction between our church members and the life of the community. Church members are encouraged to seek out participation in Village groups as a part of churchmanship.

Perhaps the thing that is most apparent about our evangelistic task is the diversity within the intellectual group. The strong individualistic tendencies of the intellectual in any age seem to be intensified in this generation. What is most typical about a "successful" intellectual in the Village today (that is, a person who is using his creative talent to earn his living) is his passion for anonymity. He does not live a bohemian existence, but a fairly quiet, modestly comfortable, apartment existence, surrounded by evidences of his own taste and with a

very small circle of friends. He is likely to eschew metaphysical questions altogether, except in so far as they may be raised by psychoanalytic experiences. Indeed the deep levels of a psychiatric experience are the gates through which the Christian gospel can best enter into his life. He is likely to have a view of man's nature that is closer to the classic Christian understanding of man as sinner than any other person in our society.

He is apolitically liberal in his social views, although there is a growing tendency to see sense in the kind of new conservatism that Peter Viereck represents. Many avant garde writers of the *Partisan Review* calibre have come around the circle from extreme Marxism to this position.

Except for this very select group who have come to share Peter Viereck's criticism of the new Gaylord Babbitts (sons of Babbitt Senior), the great average relish their Gaylord Babbitt tastes — the *New Yorker,* WQXR, television conspicuous by its absence, wrought iron furniture accessories, and tickets to Arthur Miller's latest play.

There are some distinct exceptions to this norm of anonymous privacy in the Village.

There are the theatre and entertainment people who inhabit their own gregarious world of interlocking small circles.

There are the extreme bohemians, who are no longer typical Villagers. They hang out in a few bars that flourish on the old reputation of the Village and the patronage of tourists and extreme personality deviates from all over the city.

Another group, which also tends to be diminishing, but by no means with such ignominy, are the political liberals. There is an almost negligible number of party liners, communists and fellow travellers left in the Village. Those who still hold on have become so well tagged that even they must find somewhat farcical the maneuvers to keep reappearing as a new reform group with a new cause and a new name.

The non-communist liberals are generally strong idealists with deep convictions along the lines of New Deal legislation. They are strongly organized in a Village A.D.A. branch, which is the most dynamic organization of any kind in the Village. They are generally young professional people with a high degree of personal competency in organization and program. For many of them A.D.A. is a concrete representation of their religious beliefs — "Earth shall be fair and liberals will make it so." They are extremely critical of political compromise as being a betrayal of ideals, and yet curiously pragmatic when actually engaged in a political battle after all the ideological conflicts have been clearly rationalized.

It is with this latter group that the church has had the best entrée so far. The social concern of the church has drawn many of them. Some have withdrawn hastily when they discovered at the heart of the church a strong conviction that the judgment of God rested upon liberal causes as well as upon other areas of man's life. Many others have stayed.

The name and stature of Reinhold Niebuhr goes before all we do in this field. He is widely regarded as the prophet of our time, particularly among the A.D.A. group, and many are curious about the religious roots of his wisdom.

It is very difficult to make any judgment of the effectiveness of our church in the midst of this special mission. It is almost impossible to discover the lines that delimit the church itself from its witness in the community. People stand in all degrees of attraction to and identification with the gospel and the church. At least we have dispelled the common notion that the church can be disregarded because it is so isolated from the real interests and anxieties of the community. Several years will have to pass before we can build up the kind of rapprochement with all the various groups of intellectuals in the Village. I believe that with a consistent ministry and the continuation of the open church fellowship that we have had in the past years such will come to pass.

A Study of Forsyth

P. T. Forsyth: Prophet for Today, by Robert McAfee Brown. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952.

The movement away from theological liberalism toward a recovery of some sort of Christian orthodoxy is one in which many of us participate today. What makes P. T. Forsyth of contemporary interest is that in his lifetime, 1848-1921, he illustrated the fulfillment of that tendency before there were any faint stirrings of it in the United States. If we look up Forsyth in a good library, we shall find that he wrote 25 books — to a total of 5408 pages — and an additional 260 articles. And then we shall wonder where to begin. The answer to our problem is at hand in Robert McAfee Brown's recent book, *P. T. Forsyth: Prophet for Today.*

Dr. Brown brings to his task admirable skills as an historian, as a theologian, and as a writer. He has mastered his documentary sources, and has also checked with personal acquaintances. He manages to deal with profound issues in theology without pedantry, and with simplicity, order, and clarity. He understands the effective use of the topic sentence. He can turn a nice metaphor now and then. And he has a talent for compact utterance: "Where liberalism urges a faith like Christ's, Forsyth urges a faith in Christ; where liberalism stresses Christ's preaching, Forsyth stresses Christ preached; where liberalism stresses Christ as the one who consummates humanity, Forsyth stresses Christ as the one who redeems humanity." (p. 36)

The topical ordering of the material by chapters is such as to engage our eager attention. After the opening section on "Prophet's Progress", there are stimulating discussions of the positive gospel, of the relationship of religion to culture, of the cruciality of Christ, of the problem of authority, of the theological foundation of ethics, of the meaning of history, and of the necessity of the Church. I find each one of these discussions provocative with fresh insight, and yet solid with rich but simple sustenance.

The quotations from Forsyth's own writings are entered judiciously.— "I was turned from a Christian to a believer, from a lover of love to an object of grace." (p. 21) — "Christianity used to mean the ethic of atonement. Now it is but that of attunement or even attainment." (p. 112) — "One of the greatest dangers is a truly pious man with a conventional morality in the midst of a great crisis." (p. 129) — "The result of his life and teaching was that they all forsook him and fled; but the result of his cross, resurrection, and glory was to rally them and create the Church in which he dwells." (p. 119) — Perhaps that is enough at this point to suggest that many of us will want to go on from Brown's book to the original sources on which he draws.

If the conscientious critic must cavil at something, then let me do my duty. The central idea in Forsyth is that of the free gift of God's grace. Now I happen to like my Bible thick, not thin. I believe in a four-dimensional Christ who fills out all the categories of space and of time, as well as in a Christ who operates in the fifth dimension of eternity. And there are places where I feel that Forsyth, under the dominion of his *idée fixe,* narrows the gospel unduly. It is not to be conceded that the Biblical view of history emphasizes crisis to the exclusion of all continuities. It is not clear that Forsyth has allowed for either the imperative quality or the full scope of the Christian ethic. And for all his brilliant treatment of the "cruciality of the cross", when he gets on with the pre-existence, the kenosis, and the plerosis of Christ, I begin to feel that my Savior is being turned into a wooden idol instead of a living God. In brief I can't believe that there is any *one* category —

whether of grace, or of love, or of omnipotent will — that can exhaust the fullness and the richness of the gospel.

Having said all that, and having meant it, I still have to say that this is one of the most profoundly moving books in theology that I have read in a long time. This is because, in our generation, we are still in the process of recovering the meaning of the grace of God. And the very narrowness and intensity of Forsyth's vision enable him to turn a sharp light on a whole series of problems — the heart of the gospel, the theological bases of ethics, the role of authority, the character of the church, the quality of the ministry and of the sacraments, the crucial issue in the ecumenical movement, the relationship of Christianity and culture — and to illuminate these problems with insight and with power.

In conclusion there are two good reasons, and a third, best reason for reading the book under review. One reason is that it will enable the reader to be theologically in the know, abreast of the times. Another good reason is that this is a first book by an author, Dr. Brown, for whose future achievements in theology, historical or systematic, many of us have high expectations. The third and best reason, however, is that this book does speak remarkably well to our own condition; that, while it tells us about another man and his times, it tells us something about ourselves and our own times; and also tells us about the eternal gospel that is in and through as well as beyond all time. The subtitle of this book on Forsyth is both accurate and adequate — *Prophet for Today!*

Robert E. Fitch

Religion in the Schools

American Education and Religion, edited by F. Ernest Johnson. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952.

Why another book of general essays on the problems of religion in our schools? This was the actual mood, it now can be confessed, with which this reviewer approached his task. But the reading radically changed the mood. This little volume is must reading. Nowhere can one find a more comprehensive treatment of the basic issues in as rigorous and irenic a spirit by able leaders representing as wide a range of viewpoints and presuppositions. We are indebted to the Jewish Theological Seminary for another significant study.

F. Ernest Johnson, editor and general "chairman" of the discussion, clearly states the problem: "How can public education, in accord with its function of putting each generation in possession of its full cultural heritage, do justice to the religious phase of that heritage without doing violence to religious liberty as constitutionally safeguarded?" (p. 6) Around this basic problem ten able thinkers join Dr. Johnson in sharing their carefully formulated convictions. This reviewer believes that their efforts will sharpen future discussion at the level of basic issues, and will strengthen mutual understanding "between men of goodwill in avowedly religious and avowedly secularist groups". (p. 6)

During the course of the debate one encounters the standard issues and viewpoints plus frequently sharpened nuances which require more sharply delineated pigeonholes. Space limitations forbid critical evaluations of each of the contributions. Rather, the following summary is offered, at the risk of over-simplification, in the hope that it brings out some of the chief positions and invites more careful study of those positions.

1. A position emphasizing separation of church and state and rejecting all religions — traditional, broadly theistic, philosophically democratic, even naturalistic (which is designated as but another "sectarian faith") — from education.

Miss Thayer maintains that no "ism" can permeate free education, but only a *method.* This method she boldly terms "secularism", i.e. "an effort to carve out areas of common agreement and common action as between people whose interests overlap and who disagree vigorously in

matters they consider fundamental". (p. 31) Education thus aims chiefly at the goal of strengthening communication.

2. Positions emphasizing separation of church and state but insisting that religious values, moral and spiritual, are intrinsic to man's total needs in education.

Whether Miss Thayer completely opposes this view is not clear. She certainly does not expound it as do Matthew P. Gaffney, speaking as a high school superintendent, and Ordway Tead, chairman of the board of higher education, New York City. Dr. Tead makes a fervent plea for a "highest common factor of agreement compatible with sincere diversity of conviction", (p. 128) while assuming that any attempt to inject specific theological or institutional religious elements will but eventuate in frustration and conflict.

3. Positions emphasizing separation of church and state but insisting that religion, i.e. specific institutional beliefs, worship, etc., is essential to enduring moral and spiritual values and must, in some manner, be made a more intrinsic part of education.

These writers are the proponents of the "cut flower" thesis. The Jewish spokesman, Simon Greenberg, is worried about any compulsive support for religion, granting that some experimentation might be made with fusing theistic religious meanings with regular courses in history, literature, and others. He remains, however, as a member of a minority group, convinced that the home and church must assume responsibility for specific religious nurture. Nevin C. Harner, the Protestant spokesman, Mildred McAfee Horton, discussing religion in privately supported higher education, Samuel L. Hamilton, treating religion in a privately supported school of education, and Roscoe L. West, examining religion in a state teachers college — all four are concerned to see more curricular and other experiments which will strengthen non-sectarian, objective religious teaching which will be "out and out theism". All of them, it goes without saying, are acutely aware of the problems involved and propose no simple formula. And they differ regarding the specific proposals suggested.

4. Positions emphasizing safeguards for religious liberty but believing that fresh thinking is needed with regard to all the issues involved in *separation* of church and state and *cooperation* of church and state.

Within this general position, J. Hillis Miller is concerned with how the Christian faith can be presented as at least a live option in state universities. He believes our constitutional tradition aims primarily at maintaining political equality for all religious groups without establishing any one tradition. (pp. 100 and 105) Dr. Johnson, drawing heavily upon the Zorach court decision, holds that religious indoctrination should be prohibited, that religionists should not resort to the argument that only "believers" can be good citizens, that specific, even controversial, religious meanings and institutions can be objectively taught *about* in public schools, and that some religious symbolism may be permitted in public schools when a community wants such. (pp. 190-203)

5. The Roman Catholic position argued with irenic frankness by Frederick G. Hochwalt, director, department of education, National Catholic Welfare Conference.

He combines a clear analysis of the Catholic position with much realistic insight regarding the situation in this nation. Of important incidental value is his summary of recent Roman experiments in their own education program for American citizenship. (pp. 67-71)

These, in brief, are some of the positions and problems covered. The writers, under the able leadership of Dr. Johnson, call us to an urgent task. Two basic difficulties clearly stated in the words of Dr. West can well serve to challenge all of us to corporate work upon this urgent task:

> "The proposal of the committee of the American Council on Education that religion should be studied as a part of the culture, and that it can be handled objectively as a controversial issue just as

items in politics or economics are treated, is an extremely intriguing view. . . . Religion, however, is not considered by most people as a *search for truth,* but as acceptance of certain truth previously established and having divine sanction." (p. 138)

"Until the churches get a common understanding of what religion is and how its literature should be interpreted, the public school trying to handle this material is in a ticklish situation." (p. 139)

Prentiss L. Pemberton

Economics and Ethics

Goals of Economic Life, edited by A. Dudley Ward. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953.

This recently published work is the product of some of the ablest minds in Protestantism and the social sciences. It was begun under the auspices of the Department of Church and Economic Life of the Federal Council of Churches, and completed this year under the sponsorship of the new National Council.

Actually this study is a part of a much broader one — made possible by the aid of the Rockefeller Foundation — and examining the relation of Christian ethics to economic life. In all there are to be six volumes of which this is the first.

While this is a volume of individual essays, considerable conference and study has preceded the writing of the individual contributions. The purpose was to set a general framework within which the ensuing discussion could take place. Dr. Theodore M. Greene of Yale stresses in his introduction to the volume that the framework "called for an analysis of our complex economy, with special regard to the values which it promotes and fails to promote; for a study of this economy in the context of wider secular and ethical perspectives; and, finally, for a critique of our economic society from the religious perspective of the Christian faith."

The participants have attempted here both a factual and normaltive study of Western democratic society — an analysis that concentrates on the economy initially, but also seeks to give a wider interpretive framework, and a final Christian orientation.

With this in mind several economists are called upon to bring their insights to bear upon the intricacies of the economy. But exclusive concentration on the economy proves not to be sufficient. The economy must be understood as a part of the wider context of human society. So, a political scientist, a student of law, a psychologist, an anthropologist, and a biologist bring their insights to bear upon economic developments, specifically as to what the economy is and what it ought to be. Finally, two distinguished theologians give the Christian orientation for the entire project.

The writers have been careful to note, wherever possible, areas of agreement and disagreement. Having rejected the concept of the "economic man", as a horse that can only be ridden so far and not too hard, they apparently agree that man can only be understood in the context of his own environment, as has already been noted.

On the other hand there seems to be much less agreement, as Mr. Greene has put it, "as to whether all natural phenomena, inanimate and animate, subhuman and human, should be conceived of within a still more embracing framework of 'spiritual laws', and as the creation of a Deity who transcends the whole of nature and sustains it as its ultimate Ground."

Since this is a basic affirmation of the Christian faith, it is important to note that some of the contributors seem to accept some form of Christian theism, and others — by silence on the issue — seem to imply an unwillingness to accept any kind of metaphysical position.

But if one kind of common faith were to be expressed by the writers, Mr. Greene suggests the following: "We all believe that the universe in which we find ourselves is,

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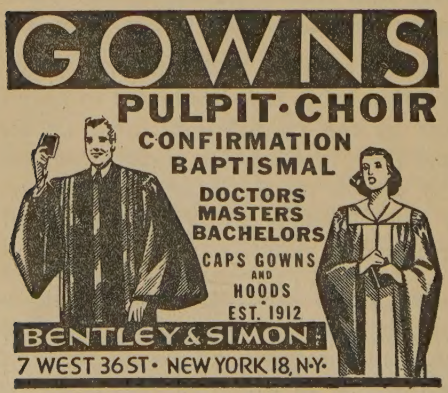
in some meaningful sense, a whole whose parts, aspects, and dimensions are related to one another in many ways, and that man's persistent attempts to discern the basic structure and character of this 'whole' are themselves meaningful and significant." "Positivistic" or dogmatically anti-metaphysical approaches are given short shrift by this group.

Another important issue threads the fabric of this discussion. It is the role of economic competition. Faced by the inevitable injustices of a completely free economy, and in turn rejecting Marxism's alternative of a political oligarchy and an odious tyranny, Mr. Greene reflects his colleagues' dilemma: Just "what sort of noncompetitive life net can be placed under the institution of competition to safeguard its demonstrable values and to minimize its no less demonstrable dangers?"

No easy policy answer is presented to this problem — although some alternatives are suggested. For readers of *Christianity and Society* it would seem that the basic help of such a book on the goals of economic life is to provide basic study material, materials that will aid those having to make day by day decisions on their attitudes toward, and in helping fashion, economic policy.

One further word. What kind of economy can be expected in the year 2000 will not be found elaborated in this study, but it does a remarkable job in clarifying where we have been. As Mr. Charles P. Taft, Chairman of the Department of the Church and Economic Life, suggests in his Foreword, the changes in economic life in the past half century have been incredible — including what *Fortune* magazine has recently been acclaiming as the "Permanent Revolution". As churchmen continue to adapt themselves to the ethical problems of a swiftly changing economic life, with imagination and creativity, there will be little need to trouble about those who are irresponsible in dealing with the goals of economic life.

Earl A. Holmer



It is not easy to write a brief review of *Goals of Economic Life*. This is partly because of the difficulty which is always the case with symposia of doing justice to very varied contributions. In this case, however, there is the added complication that it is only the first of a six volume enquiry on "Christian Ethics and Economic Life" sponsored by the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. With this caution I am venturing to make four points about this present volume as a whole, since there is no space to deal with the contributions severally.

1. The symposium makes great demands on its readers. Prof. Greene valiantly tries in the introduction to isolate the basic issues which appear, but it is doubtful whether the various contributors realize them, and if they had not been isolated one fears that most readers would fail to spot them. In any case they have to be stated in a very general way, because not all the contributors are Christians, and this makes them appear abstract to those who have a specifically Christian interest in the enquiry. Fortunately Professors John Bennett and Reinhold Niebuhr do address themselves in the last two chapters to the problems created by modern economic life for Christian theology. One cannot resist the impression that the book has been published in too much of a hurry. The intellectual divisions in the specialized academic worlds are so great today that it takes time for men from the

different branches of knowledge to understand one another, and even to agree on the framing of the questions to which they are to address themselves. Perhaps it is utopian to expect busy men ever to give the necessary time, but one cannot repress a wish that in this case they had given themselves longer together before they wrote. The result is that each has written a very concentrated chapter on his own special theme without explicit reference to anyone else. Only Professors Greene, Bennett, and Niebuhr make an attempt to relate themselves to others. The last two steal the show and enable theology to make a most impressive contribution.

2. The common bond between the writers is a liberal assumption about persons and their worth: the question whether religion makes much difference, or is an optional extra, to these agreed assumptions which can be maintained without it, is raised at the beginning but not systematically discussed. It is, of course, part of the continual debate of humanism vs. Christianity in the modern world. Professor Knight would represent the negative side in this debate. He appears to be the complete rationalist liberal (and his pages on the Middle Ages tell us at least as much about him as they do about them). It is interesting to see that the contribution of the two theologians is described as that of a liberal Christian faith. Many will be surprised to see Niebuhr and Bennett described in this way. Nevertheless I think it is right and to be welcomed. If openness to empirical evidence is a characteristic of liberal theology then both are liberals. Indeed it is doubtful if traditional Catholic and Protestant orthodoxies as they have become fixed have ever, or can ever, do justice to empirical facts, a point which Prof. Boulding makes in another connection when he discusses the difficulties of orthodoxies in dealing with dynamic situations. The older liberal theologians erred chiefly in their doctrine of man, but they have been corrected by liberal methods, by further attention to the empirical data of both general and special revelation. Is this book a sign that what has usually been called neo-orthodoxy can now be seen as a true child of liberalism, to be in fact a new and deeper liberalism?

3. On the economic side the sensitive essay by Prof. J. M. Clark (and indeed others) brings out the special conditions within which the theory of the market in classical economics works, and the extent to which it assumes a far-reaching cultural, social and moral milieu. Prof. Heimann's essay is in this respect very close to the analysis made by Canon V. A. Demant in his recent Scott Holland memorial lectures which, adapting the title of the famous first lectures in the series by R. H. Tawney, he has called "Religion and the Decline of Capitalism." An attentive reader of this symposium will find the more common misapprehensions of the simple minded advocates of both capitalism and socialism faithfully dealt with. It is left, however, to the theologians to deal with the moral issues involved.

4. The general tone of the contributors is optimistic. With the power of the American economy behind them this is not surprising. What is not clearly faced is the effect on the outside world of an economy so uncontrolled and yet so dynamic (if one uses a favorable word) or unstable (if one uses an unfavorable one). This would appear to raise weighty moral issues for the United States. Only a slight recession in the U.S.A. could cause widespread distress in the rest of the world, both in Europe and in primary producing countries; a more severe one would cause chaos. The economist's pressure for freedom does not do justice to this.

These points of criticism are a tribute to an impressive undertaking. It was long overdue. It is a matter for rejoicing that the necessary funds were available. A good start has been made; there are five more volumes to come; they will be eagerly awaited. Ronald H. Preston

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